

Congresswoman Kaptur joined a strong bipartisan majority in the House of Representatives to protect 11 million seniors from unfair increases in their Medicare Part B premiums for 2010.

“It is not fair, during these tough economic times, to put additional burdens on our seniors and people with disabilities,” said Congresswoman Kaptur.

The House voted 406-18 to pass the Medicare Premium Fairness Act. Under current law, for almost three quarters of all Medicare enrollees, the Medicare Part B premium cannot increase more than the cost of living adjustment for Social Security, which is likely to be zero next year. (Part B covers physician and outpatient care and is deducted from Social Security checks.)

This bill would ensure that 2010 Part B premiums will remain at \$96.40 per month. Without congressional action, approximately one in four Medicare enrollees will see their Part B premiums increase to \$110 or even \$120 per month.

Those who will see this premium increase would include: low-income dual eligibles, paid for by the states; higher-income Medicare beneficiaries; new Medicare enrollees; and, enrollees whose Medicare payments are not deducted from their Social Security checks.

Congresswoman Kaptur stressed that the House action would not add to the deficit because the estimated cost of the bill (\$2.8 billion) is fully paid for through financing from the Medicare Improvement Fund.